

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: November 27, 2023
To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Gabby Rodriguez, Accessibility, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator
Report Number: COU23-133
Attachments: City of Stratford 2023-2028 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Title: 2023-2028 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Objective: To seek Council approval of the City of Stratford's 2023-2028 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

Background: The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) was enacted by the provincial government in 2005. Under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) adopted under that Act, the City is required to adopt a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and provide annual updates to Council on the progress made.

This is the third multi-year accessibility plan for the City of Stratford. The most recent plan approved covered the period 2018-2022. The City is committed to providing equal treatment to people with disabilities with respect to the use and benefit of services, programs, goods, and facilities in a manner that respects their dignity, independence, and integration, and is equitable in relation to the broader public. This commitment extends to residents, employees, visitors, and other stakeholders with visible and non-visible disabilities.

Analysis: The 2023-2028 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP), attached to this report, provides an overview of the initiatives completed from the 2013-2018 and 2019-2022 MYAPs and how the City continues to work toward creating an accessible and inclusive city under the five standards of the AODA:

1. Information and Communication
2. Employment
3. Transportation
4. Design of Public Spaces
5. Customer Service

The Status Update was circulated to the Accessibility Advisory Committee for review. No significant changes were requested.

The City will continue to review and improve its services, facilities, and infrastructure and work towards eliminating barriers and creating an accessible City that can serve everyone with ease as well as meeting AODA's goal of developing an accessible Ontario by 2025.

Two specific future projects are included in the draft operating budget for 2024. The first is renovating Stratford Police Headquarters to provide an accessible entrance (\$275,000). The second is an expansion request to purchase accessibility software that will assist in auditing the City's website for accessible communication and remediating PDF documents (\$30,000/annually). This is intended to ensure the City's communication and information reaches all public members effectively.

Accessibility elements are also included in various other capital and operating plans throughout the social services, infrastructure services and community services divisions.

Financial Implications:

Financial impact to current year operating budget:

There are no current year financial impacts to be reported as a result of this report.

Financial impact on future year operating budget:

There is no direct financial impact relating to adopting the plan. The financial impacts for specific initiatives being proposed in the 2024 draft budget is an estimated total of \$300,000 and will be presented as part of the 2024 budget process.

Link to asset management plan and strategy:

Renovating the justice building will have an impact to the asset registry of the City and represents a change to the historical and replacement costs of these building components

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Mobility, Accessibility and Design Excellence

Improving ways to get around, to and from Stratford by public transit, active transportation and private vehicle.

Strengthening our Plans, Strategies and Partnerships

Partnering with the community to make plans for our collective priorities in arts, culture, heritage and more. Communicating clearly with the public around our plans and activities.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:

Health and Happiness

Encouraging active, social, meaningful lives to promote good health and wellbeing.

Equity and Local Economy

Creating safe, equitable places to live and work which support local prosperity and international fair trade.

Culture and Community

Nurturing local identity and heritage, empowering communities and promoting a culture of sustainable living.

Staff Recommendation: THAT the City of Stratford 2023-2028 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan be adopted;

AND THAT staff be directed to upload the plan to the City's website.

Prepared by: Gabby Rodriguez, Accessibility, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator

Recommended by: Kevin Bonnell, Manager of Inclusion, Equity and Indigenous Initiatives
Anne Kircos, Director of Human Resources
Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer